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INCOMING TELEGRAM

ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 [illegible] H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 [illegible]-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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R 101258Z OCT 80
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5268
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINGSTON 7556

E.O. 12065: GDS 10/9/86 (JDFORBES) OR-P
TAGS: PINT, JM
SUBJECT: POLL INDICATES JAMAICAN OPPOSITION WILL WIN

REF: (A) KINGSTON 7098, (B) KINGSTON 7251

1. (U) SUMMARY. THE MOST RECENT PUBLIC OPINION POLL CONDUCTED BY DR. CARL STONE, JAMAICA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL POLLSTER, INDICATES THAT THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP) WILL DEFEAT THE RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) IN THE OCTOBER 30 GENERAL ELECTION. STONE'S RESULTS SHOW AN INCREASE IN PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE JLP IN ALL REGIONS OF THE ISLAND. ON THE BASIS OF THE OPPOSITIONS'S 53.8 PERCENT TO 46.2 PERCENT LEAD, STONE PREDICTS THE JLP WILL WIN 38 TO 40 OF THE NATION'S 60 CONSTITUENCIES. IN CONTRAST TO ALL PREVIOUS POLLS FOR THE FIRST TIME SLIGHTLY MORE JAMAICANS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN OPPOSITION LEADER EDWARD SEAGA'S ABILITY TO GOVERN THE COUNTRY THAN EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN PRIMIN MANLEY'S ABILITY. THIS POLL IS BEING STRONGLY CRITICIZED BY SUPPORTERS OF THE PNP WHO CLAIM THAT STONE HAS CHANGED HIS FINDINGS TO BOLSTER JLP CHANCES OF CIVTORY. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) STONE'S LATEST POLL WHICH WAS CONDUCTED FROM SEPTEMBER 5 TO 14 WITH 1,964 RESPONDENTS AND A MARGIN OF ERROR OF PLUS OR MINUS 5 PERCENT GIVES THE JLP 53.8 PERCENT OF THOSE WHO INDICATED THEY WERE REGISTERED AND INTENDED TO VOTE. THE POLL WAS PUBLISHED DAILY OVER AN ELEVEN DAY PERIOD IN THE DAILY GLEANER. THE OPPOSITION IS AHEAD OF THE PNP IN EVERY PARISH EXCEPT KINGSTON/ ST. ANDREW AND ST. MARY. THE FLLOWING CHART SUMMARIZES STONE'S FINDINGS AND SHOWS THE PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF EACH REGION IN STONE'S SEPTEMBER ANALYSIS, THE ACTUAL VOTE IN 1976 AND THE PERCENT OF SWING TO THE JLP PUBLISHED BY STONE.

REGION	NO. OF SEATS	SEPT. 1980 PNP	SEPT. 1980 JLP	DEC. 1976 PNP	DEC. 1976 JLP	PERCENT SWING TO JLP
KINGSTON	15	53	47	61.9	38.1	8.9
EASTERN	8	48.3	51.7	55	45	6.7
EAST CENTRAL	13	42.4	57.6	50.6	49.4	8.2
WEST CENTRAL	12	44.1	55.9	55.8	44.2	11.7
WESTERN	12	42.5	57.5	56.7	43.3	14.2

(THE EASTERN REGION INCUDES ST. THOMAS, PORTLAND AND ST. MARY; EAST CENTRAL, ST. CATHERINE AND CLARENDON; WEST CENTRAL, ST. ANN, MANCHESTER AND ST. ELIZABETH; WESTERN, TRELAWNY, ST. JAMES, HANOVER AND WESTMORELAND).

EIGHT PERCENT OF THOSE SURVEYED INDICATED THAT THEY INTEND TO VOTE. STONE ESTIMATES THAT THIS WILL RESULT IN 76 TO 82 PERCENT OF THE ELIGIBLE VOTERS GOING TO THE POLLS WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE THE LARGEST TURNOUT IN JAMAICA'S HISTORY.

3. (U) DRAWING ON HIS EXPERIENCE AS A POLLSTER AND HISTORICAL PRECEDENT, STONE PREDICTS THAT THE 53.8 PERCENT LEAD OF THE JLP AND ITS DISTRIBUTION ACROSS THE ISLAND WILL RESULT IN A 38-40 SEAT VICTORY FOR THE OPPOSITION. (STONE ELIMINATED FROM HIS STATISTICS 18 PERCENT OF THOSE REGISTERED WHO INDICATED THEY WOULD NOT VOTE. STONE MAHES THE FOLLOWING POINTS TO BACK UP THIS PREDICTION. A) DESPITE HAVING FORMED FOUR OF THE EIGHT ELECTED GOVERNMENTS SINCE 1944 THE JLP HAS NEVER WON 51 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. B) JAMAICA'S ELECTORAL SYSTEM GIVES PARTIES WINNING BY SMALL VOTE MARGINS COMFORTABLE SEAT MARGINS. C) THE JLP ALWAYS HAS THE ADVANTAGE OVER THE PNP IN A CLOSE VOTE BECAUSE IT IS STRONGER IN THE MORE SPARSELY POPULATED RURAL CONSTITUENCIES. D) THE JLP HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY AHEAD IN THE POLLS THROUGHOUT 1980 AS THE PNP WAS PRIOR TO ITS VICTORY IN 1976.

4. (U) STONE INCLUDED A QUESTION IN THIS POLL SPECIFICALLY ASKING RESPONDENTS IF THEY FELT PRIMIN MANLEY OR OPPOSITION LEADER SEAGA WAS BETTER QUALIFIED TO RUN THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A STONE POLL, SLIGHTLY MORE RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN SEAGA (39.8) THAN DID IN MANLEY (36.3). STONE INTERPRETS THIS, TO MEAN THAT THE PERSONALITIES OF THE PARTY LEADERS WILL PLAY A LESS IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE OUTCOME OF THIS ELECTION THAN THEY DID IN 1976 WHEN AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF JAMAICANS PREFERRED MANLEY TO SEAGA.

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REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE 25 JUN 1982
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5269
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
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C O N F I D E N T I A SECTIO 2 OF 2 KINGSTON 7556

5. (U) SINCE THE RESULTS OF THE STONE POLL HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED SUPPORTERS AND OFFIIALS OF THE PNP HAVE BEEN ATTTACKING BOTH ITS FIGURES AND STONE'S CONCLUSION. PNP DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY AND FORMER UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES POLITICAL SCIENTIST PAUL ROBERTSON LAUNCHED THE ATTACK DURING THE RULING PARTIES AN NUAL CONVENTION IN MONTEGO BAY. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD ON OCTOBER 4 DR. ROBERTSON CLAIMED TO HAVE DONE A POLL WHICH SHOWED RESULTS SIMILAR TO STONE'S IN KINGSTON AND THE EASTERN PARISHES BUT WHICH DIFFERED GREATLY IN THE WEST. ROBERTSON CHARACTERIZED STONE'S STATISITCS ON WESTERN JAMAICA AS "RIDICULOUS FINDINGS" AND IMPLIED THAT STONE HAD DOCTORED HIS STATISTICS TO JUSTIFY THE CONCLUSION THAT THE JLP WILL WIN THE OCTOBER 3Ø ELECTIONS. THE NEXT DAY PRIM MANLEY IN THE NATIONALLY TELEVISHED SPEECH IN WHICH HE ANNOUNCED THE ELECTION DATE REITERATED ROBERTSON'S CHARGES OF PARTISANSHIP ON STONE'S PART. SEVERAL DAILY NEWS COLUMINISTS WHO SUPPORT THE PNP HAVE TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO AMPLIFY THESE ACCUSATION AND A DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL HALF HEARTEDLY NOTES THAT "THE ONLY POLL WHOSE ACCURACY WE CAN DEPEND UPON" IS THE ELECTION.

6. (C) COMMENT: CARL STONE HAS AN EXCELLENT REPUTATON AS A POLLSTER IN JAMAICA. STONE'S NOVEMBER 1976 POLL PREDICTED A PNP VICTORY BY 13 PERCENT. THE FINAL MARGIN IN THE ELECTION WAS 13.6 PERCENT. IN SEPTEMBER 1976 HE SHOWED ONLY A 2.8 PERCENT LEAD FOR THE PNP AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE TWO 1976 FIGURES IS BEING CITED BY RULING PARTY LOYALISTS AS A HOPEFUL SIGN FOR 1980. THE EMBASSY HAS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT STONE'S METHODS AND CONCLUSIONS ARE NOT SCIENTIFIC AND CREDIBLE WITHIN THE LIMITS OF POLITICAL POLLING. ALTHOUGH STONE HAS PERSONALLY SWITCHED HIS ALLEGIANCE FROM THE PNP TO THE JLP, HIS UNIVERSITY AND JOURNALISTIC CAREERS WOULD BE SERIOUSLY HINDERED IF HIS POLLS WERE NOT OBJECTIVELY CONDUCTED.
LAWRENCE

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